

## FOR YOUR PRESCHOOL CHILD \* 4-5 YEARS OLD

*"Parents are responsible for what the child is offered to eat and how it is presented, children are responsible for how much food they eat and whether they eat."*

*—Ellyn Satter, family therapist and Registered Dietitian*

### Acknowledge Good Behavior!

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#### Set a good example

- Eat a variety of foods yourself
- Children copy those around them, including bad habits
- Even if you aren't eating at the same time, be with your child while he/she is eating

#### Expect setbacks

- A change in routine may affect appetite
- Being tired or excited may affect appetite
- A child may need help at these times



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Vermont Chapter

This is a time for your child to learn good habits about food and eating. Children learn best if they see what they should do; if they feel good about eating; and if poor behavior is ignored. Learning healthy habits now can last a lifetime.

#### Encourage your child to self-feed

- To help: cut food into bite size pieces, serve soup in a cup
- Stock kitchen with child size cups, dishes and utensils
- Expect some spills and messes
- Remember your child is still learning

#### Avoid using food as a bribe

- Eating should not be a reward or punishment

Acknowledge Good Behavior!  
Helpful Hints in Menu Planning  
Food Guide and Pyramid  
Sample Menu  
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#### Help your child enjoy mealtime

- Have quiet times before meals
- Talk to your child about their day
- Eating area should be calm
- Turn off TV
- Discuss problems later
- Make meal time family time

#### Ignore poor behavior

- Children will continue making a fuss, if they get attention
- Remove child from table until ready to rejoin family
- If child isn't hungry, that's okay; remove food without struggle

## Helpful Hints in Menu Planning

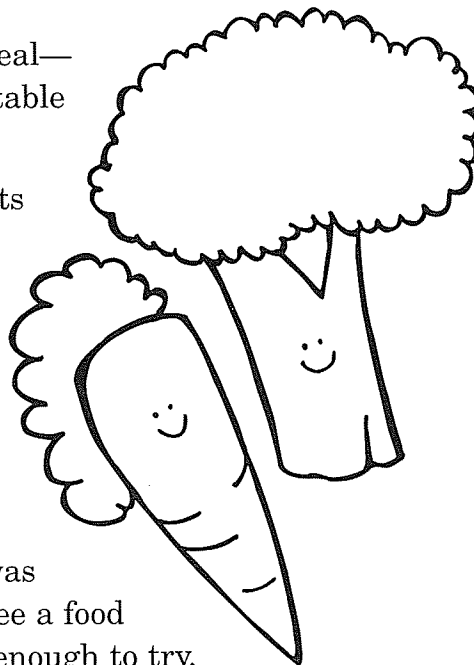
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- Use the Food Guide Pyramid when planning meals and include healthy foods.
- Include planned snacks as part of the daily menu.
- Buy nutritious foods. This makes it easier to offer healthy choices to your child.
- Serve the same meal to the whole family with smaller portions for younger children. Give small portions (1 tablespoon) to start and allow him to ask for more.
- Allow your child some choices: Let the child choose the kind of sandwich (or soup) for lunch, or the kind of juice at breakfast. Respect your child's need to refuse foods at times.
- Offer a variety of foods served in different ways: fresh and cooked vegetables, baked chicken and in soup, cereal dry and with milk.
- Try different textures in a meal: crisp raw vegetables; smooth cream soup; moist, tender meat for easy chewing.
- Avoid salty, sweet and fatty foods. These can become an unhealthy habit.
- Go lightly on spices, pepper, and vinegar. Most children prefer mild flavors.
- Allow your child to help make the meal—tearing lettuce, choosing which vegetable to cook, and setting the table.
- Introduce new foods in small amounts without fuss. Serve something new with an old favorite so it has “good company.”
- Children usually like food that looks “pretty.” This can be accomplished by a variety of colors as well as shapes.
- Keep offering a new food even if it was rejected earlier. Kids often need to see a food many times before it looks familiar enough to try.

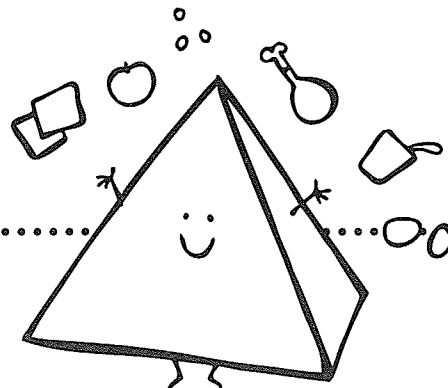


### \* TIP! \*

Clean teeth after each meal with a soft brush. If your child wants to do this, assist to be sure job is done thoroughly.



# Food Guide Pyramid



Serving size guidelines for children 4-5 years old

## Grains 6+ servings/day

Bread	1/2 slice
Cereals, rice, pasta, noodles	1/2 cup
Crackers	4-6
Pancakes, waffles	1/2-1 medium piece

## Vegetables 3 servings/day

Cooked vegetables	1/3-1/2 cup
Raw	1/4-1/2 cup or 2-3 pieces
Juice	1/2 cup or 4 ounces

*(Choose at least one serving of dark green or orange vegetables rich in vitamin A)*

## Fruit 1 servings/day

Fresh or canned	1/4-1/2 cup
100% Juice (with Vitamin C)	1/2 cup or 4 ounces

*(Choose at least one citrus fruit rich in vitamin C)*

Always choose 100% juice with vitamin C.

Limit fruit juice to 4-6 ounces per day.

## Dairy 3 servings/day

Low-fat milk (1% or skim)	6 ounces
Low-fat yogurt, cottage cheese	3/4 cup
Cheese	3/4 ounce

## Meats, poultry, fish, eggs & beans 1 servings/day

Lean meat, fish, poultry or canned tuna	4-5 tablespoons or 2-3 ounces
Eggs	1
Cooked beans and peas	2-4 tablespoons
Peanut Butter	2 tablespoons
Tofu	4 tablespoons

## Fats and Oils 3-4 servings/day

Margarine, butter, oil (olive, canola or peanut)	1 teaspoon
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# Sample Menu

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## Day 1

### Breakfast

Orange juice, 1/2 cup  
Cereal, 1/4–1/2 cup  
Whole wheat toast, 1 slice  
Butter, 2 teaspoons  
1% or skim milk, 3/4 cup

### Mid-morning snack

Low-fat yogurt, 3/4 cup  
Canned fruit, 1/4 cup

### Lunch

Macaroni & Cheese, 1/2 cup  
Tomato & cucumber, 4 slices  
Muffin, 1/2  
1% or skim milk, 3/4 cup

### Afternoon snack

Whole wheat toast, 1 slice  
with peanut butter, 2 tablespoons  
Apple juice, 1/4 cup

### Supper

Chicken, 2–3 ounces  
Potato, 1/4 cup  
Butter, 1 teaspoons  
Carrots, 1/4 cup  
1% or skim milk, 3/4 cup

## Day 1

Scrambled egg, 1 or 3–4 tablespoons  
Whole wheat toast, 1 slice  
Butter, 2 teaspoons  
1% or skim milk, 3/4 cup

Graham Cracker, 4–6  
Apple juice, 1/2 cup

Tuna salad sandwich, 1/2  
Vegetable soup, 1/2 cup  
Oatmeal cookies, 1–2 small  
1% or skim milk, 3/4 cup

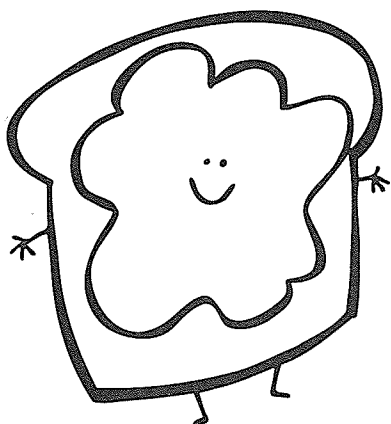
Banana, 1/2  
1% or skim milk, 3/4 cup

Spaghetti & meat sauce, 3/4 cup  
Green beans, 1/2 cup  
1% or skim milk, 3/4 cup

### Evening snack

Water, 1/2 cup  
Crackers, 2–4

Orange juice, 1/4 cup  
Crackers, 2–4



Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Nutrition Plan or Goals:

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